The Lions' Pride

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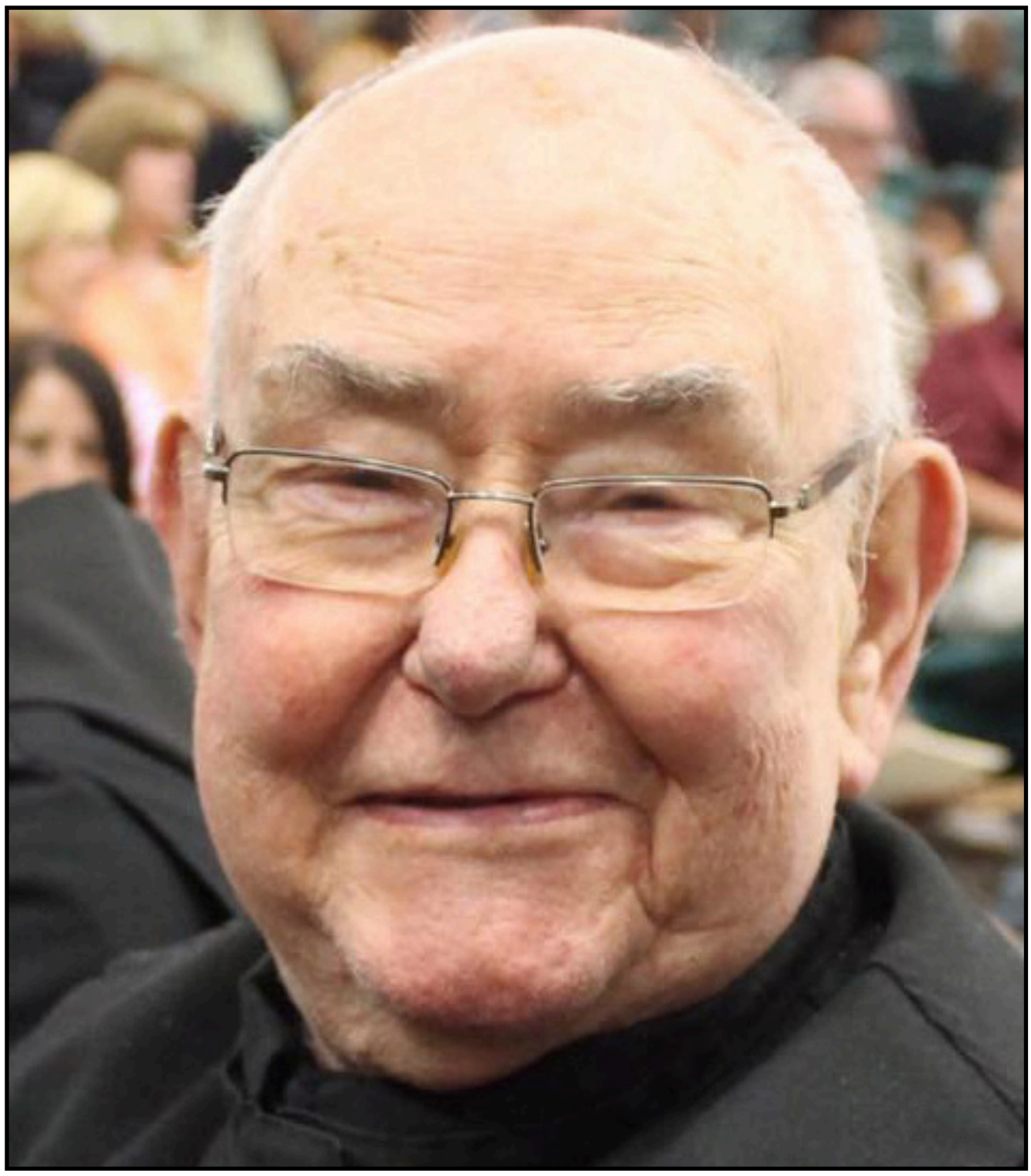
A Life of Love, Friendship, and Service: Brother Benedict Cooper

By John Hall
Contributing Writer



Brother Benedict Cooper adorned in his customary and an inviting, heart-warming smile. The beloved member of the Saint Leo family will be missed by many students, faculty, and fellow Brothers alike.

Photo by the Saint Leo Abbey

"He was one of the best [people] I've ever met!" These were the words that fell from Brother Stephen Freeman's lips as he held back a well's worth of tears. He spoke vividly of his relationship with the late Brother Benedict Cooper, who passed away on Dec. 30. The beloved Saint Leo Brother was born Harry Cooper on July 13, 1937, and is survived by two daughters and a son.

Bro. Cooper had been on the grounds of Saint Leo's Abbey since 2003, staying in the small motel across from the gift shop. Although not an Oblate at the time, he participated daily by praying, eating and communing with the monks and other Oblates after the passing of his wife.

In 2011, Cooper officially became an Oblate, going a step even further and committing himself through vows to living on the grounds of the Abbey for the remainder of his life.

Bro. Freeman continued to list the similarities that drew him to such a wonderful individual; both men were fathers and grandfathers, they both served in the Army, and spoke for hours about their families and the love they shared for them. Freeman grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and Bro. Cooper New Amsterdam, New York, which gave them even more to bond upon.

"He was a man that loved classical music!" Freeman stated, "Often as I did tours of the Abbey I would introduce him to students as the Music Director of the Abbey, as he would always be found listening to classical music."

Bro. Freeman recalls that there was only one flaw with his friend, which was that he never knew how to say "no." From the time Cooper had spent at the Abbey (which was two years prior to Freeman's arrival) until his passing, Bro. Stephen had known him to always be available and willing to assist in tasks, no matter what it may have been. Duly noted in his obituary, Bro Benedict's biggest contributions were noted in his service in the Sacristy of the Abbey, keeping things in order and clean.

Bro. Cooper's pride showed vivaciously as he sang as part of Saint Petersburg's Cathedral choir, the community was left with an indelible mark as the rich and strong tone of his voice would often overcome the singing of everyone else. At h'is wake, his daughters spoke of their father's happiness and love for the monastic lifestyle which was further confirmed through his brothers at the Abbey inclusive of Brother Freeman.

Bro. Cooper's cousin, Felecia Tullis wrote to him in memorium, "You helped me learn that those we love and who have passed are not gone from us, if we remember and keep them in our hearts!"

"He was known to have a wonderful sense of humor," said Freeman, which could only be seen as taboo for many that think of those in monastic life as individuals uptight and without joy.

Freeman paused in his recollection of his friend looking down with eyes full of tears and stated that even now, Brother Benedict Cooper's name sits on the pew besides him, which he will not allow anyone to remove just yet.

"Even at dinner I think of him, as beside me there is a cross and a candle that commemorate his position at the table," said Freeman.

Visibly heartbroken and thinking of his own mortality, Brother Stephen took joy in speaking about Brother Benedict Cooper.

Brother Cooper's humble life was a true testament to the great impact we can all have on this world through our individual talents. Respect, Integrity, and Community were the attributes collectively, and unanimously, family and friends remember him by. As we take these and other core values central to Saint Leo throughout this semester and indeed our lifetimes, let us remember Brother Benedict Cooper and use his legacy as an example of the influence we should have on this world.

Editorial

Does Your Vote Count?

By Travis Farmer
Contributing Writer

The very foundation of democracy is that the populace of a country may choose what happens in said country through voting; and for many people, the United States of America upholds this definition. However, does your vote actually count? With delegates, superdelegates, electors, and other various election-related terms, voting can quickly become confusing. For example, many people think that the popular vote determines who wins the presidency, but the results of the 2016 election prove this to be false.

Yes, your vote counts. Everyone who has the capability to vote should do so in every election cycle. According to CNN, voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election was at a 20-year low with only 58percent of the total possible voters actually having voted. Regardless of your party affiliation, you should always go out and vote not only in the presidential elections, but also in local elections. While the presidential election uses an odd voting system, many smaller elections use the basic popular vote, meaning that your vote counts fully in every meaning of the word.

But, if your vote counts, how did former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton win more votes than President-Elect Trump, yet still lose the election? The presidential election is not determined by the popular vote, but rather by the electoral vote. Every state has a specific number of electoral votes based on its population. For example, Florida has 29 electoral votes. Think of these votes almost as points, in which every state is worth a certain amount of points and whoever gets the most points is the winner. On election night, a candidate must win 270 electoral votes (points) in order to win the presidency. After the night of Tuesday, November 8 was over, Trump had won the majority of electoral votes.

Trump won key states such as Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, all states that President Obama handily won in the previous two elections. These states are how Trump won the election despite the margin in the popular vote.

States are won in a "winner-take-all" format, meaning that whichever candidate wins a state they receive all of the electoral votes. So, if you are a Republican living in a deep blue state, such as California or Washington, which are considered some of the easiest to win for the Democrats, does your vote actually matter if it is almost guaranteed your party will not win? Similarly, what if you are a Democrat living in Alabama? The answer is that of course your vote matters, but only in the case of a potential upset. If you are following pure statistics, your vote may not matter, but in actuality, it always does.

However, electoral votes are not just arbitrary points. They are a group of 538 real people who vote for the president. So, what happens when an elector votes against his or her party? Many believe that your vote does not cite a specific political phenomenon for why. Electors do not have to vote for whom their state says. For example, the 28th elector from Florida casted their vote for Clinton, despite Trump winning the state. These are called "faithless electors." In the advent of the Electoral College, there has been 157 faithless electors and the last one to cast their ballot for another party was in 1972. Luckily, many states have specific laws against electors voting for a candidate different from their party, but the punishments are not severe, mostly resulting in fines or misdemeanors.

However, this occurrence is incredibly rare. Of the 157 faithless electors, only 85 have actually changed their vote, with three of them choosing to abstain completely from voting. Although, this has not stopped many people from signing a petition asking electors to vote for Clinton instead.

Over three million people have signed a petition on Change.org begging electors to vote for Clinton instead of Trump. This outcome would be unprecedented, but possible.

So once again, does your vote count? In 99percent of outcomes it does if you look at how many electors have ever crossed party lines, only .003percent of electoral votes have went to a different party than the rightful one.

According to the CNN exit polls, which are polls taken as voters left their voting sites, many demographic groups chose Clinton over Trump. In fact, the only demographic that Trump truly owned consistently was older white men. Females, minorities, voters ages 18-44, and lower income voters all leaned towards the blue side, some with margins as large as 88percent towards Clinton.

So, if Clinton had so many demographics locked down, why did she lose the election? The sad truth is that the demographics that could have leaned the vote towards Clinton are also the demographics that tend to not vote as often as others. So, some votes may count more than others. Minority turnout was down in 2016 from 2008 and 2012, leading many experts to cite that Clinton lost exclusively to low voter turnout among those key demographics.

The 2016 election was incredibly close and should inspire citizens of both parties to get out and vote in the next election. Even if you don't live in a battleground state, you should still get out and vote in presidential, local, and midterm elections. Regardless of if you are unhappy with the results of the election or satisfied, you should vote in every election. It is your duty as an American citizen and as a supporter of democracy to allow your voice to be heard.

Here's what you missed online this week at www.prideonlinedot.wordpress.com

What's the Deal with the Big New Year's Kiss?

Photo from @NYRE

Just how did the idea of the "New Year's Eve Kiss" come about? Head online and get the scoop on this romantic tradition.

Newsroom

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Campus News

The Dream Lives On at Saint Leo

By Emily Kochanski
Campus News Editor

Gone, but never forgotten. The world continues to celebrate the life and legacy of one of the world's greatest and most influential heroes: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In honor of Martin Luther King Day, Saint Leo hosted a special celebration on Jan. 16. The day's events included a free fair for students, staff, and members of the surrounding community and their children, followed by a special presentation from guest speaker T. Leon Williams.

The children's fair kicked off at 11:00 a.m. on the SAB Green and featured arts and crafts, a colorful bounce house, carnival games, and an assortment of free snacks and campus memorabilia.

At 5:00 p.m., T. Leon Williams presented "The View from the Mountaintop: What Would Dr. King Say Today?" in the SCC Boardrooms. Williams reflected on the changes that Martin Luther King made to the world, as well as the progress that America has made.

The day concluded at 6:30 p.m. with a candle light vigil, hosted by the Rho XI of Alpha Phi Alpha, in memory of Dr. King and his legacy.

The annual event welcomed a large turnout from the community at large and provided a fun time for all. If you missed the festivities, log on to The Lion's Pride website to view pictures and video of the day's events.

Photos by Wakens Leonard

Many happy children from various parts of the Saint Leo community scampered across the SAB Green, their laughter filling the air as they took part in games, climbed through inflatable obstacle courses, jumped for joy in the bouncy house, and showed of their artistic talents with some MLK Day themed crafts.

Photo by Wakens Leonard

Guests had their choice of tasty treats; including ice cream, smoothies, piping hot soft pretzles, and chocolate dipped frozen bananas.

Worldwide

American Vs European Criminal Justice and Prison System

By Niclas Bez
Staff Writer

The American Justice system has brought the most prisoners per capita in the world to the United States. Incarceration is the most common form of punishment and rehabilitation for convicted criminals. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics in the year of 2013 there were almost 2.2 million people incarcerated in county jail, federal and state prisons. This brings the U.S. to 698 people in prison per 100,000 population.

The numbers seem even scarier when compared to history data. According to the Sentencing Project, the numbers of people being incarcerated have quadrupled since the 1980's. The biggest part of the people are in state prisons and violent crimes are the leading cause, with robbery, sexual assault, and murder are the main crimes that people get send into prison for. Another 20 percent of all convicted crimes can be ascribed to non-violent drug conviction.

"I believe that there are alternatives to prison. How and when should we use those alternatives? For example, tax offenders might be better served if they were allowed to work and pay their tax, penalties, and fines, rather than using tax dollars to house, feed, and medicate these people," said Criminal Justice Professor Joseph Cillo.

The extreme numbers of incarceration brings up the question about the effectiveness of the U.S. justice system. Many people wonder whether the system is the problem or if it is the people.

"As a retired police officer I've dealt with the U.S. Justice system and I've seen a lot of things that have gone wrong over the years. Anytime you have the "human factor" involved you have bias, prejudice, hate, deceit, politics and power --and all of this this seems to be influenced by the all might dollar. Basically, the U.S. justice system is directly associated with one's ability to pay or not to pay, as the scales of justice are weighted by the amount of money placed upon them by the defense," said Criminal Justice Professor Dr. Debra Mims.

Also, the question is brought up about the effectiveness of the rehabilitation process because the justice system seemed to be designed to help prisoners rehabilitate rather than simply to punish them, as Dr. Mims mentioned.

"Over the years the pendulum of justice seems to have swung from mandatory "three strikes" punitive approaches, to a more progressive approach of rehabilitation, and then back again. The paradigm shift seems to be in public opinion and the "get tough" on crime attitudes," said Dr. Mims. "This shift has primarily come in the attitudes of those groups that traditionally favored rehabilitation therefore, more offenders are being incarcerated versus programs geared toward rehabilitation. Sadly, the prison system may be a necessary part of a restorative justice system."

However, when looking at the effectiveness of prisons and the rehabilitation rate it is shocking to see. The National Institute of Justice published a study about 400,000 prisoners after their release in 2005. More than half of them (56.7 percent) were arrested before one year had passed by. Within three years of the release more than two-third (67.8 percent) of them were rearrested. After five years an incredible amount of 76.6 percent of prisoners had been rearrested. Compared to other countries that provide information about the reconviction rates the U.S. has the highest rate.

"Offenders return to prison for the same reason that they originally were placed in prison. Many repeat offenders are impacted socio-economically. Their actions are a result of their life experiences. Change what they are exposed to and I believe that crime will be impacted in a similar manner. I would change the Federal mandatory sentencing guide lines to allow Judges to use their common sense when deciding on a downward departure from those guide lines," said Cillo, who is also a former defense attorney.

Also, when looking at European countries it shows that reinstating prisoners into society is a big challenge for justice systems in Europe as well. According to data from the U.S. National Library, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France have reconviction rates from 35 to 45 percent within three years after the prisoner's release.

"I think that it is fair in imprisoning criminals who deserve it. However, if a prisoner is to be reinstated into society, there would have to be complete assurance that they are ready to and no longer mentally unstable, keeping people safe from them doing anything again," said Allen Keister, who is a freshman with a major in criminal justice.

With a change of the system, society would also better accept people that have been to prison before. In fact, people are calling out the government to start working on more solutions other than incarceration that are more successful in reinstating prisoners into society after they have finished their time in prison; many former prisoners are trying to change the system to be geared towards rehabilitating.

"When I get out of prison I am in the strange position of having no money. And nothing from the state, six weeks post-release, for want of a Social Security number. And without that, no bank account, no place on the myriad databases that comprise a modern existence. I do not exist – except on the police national computer," said John Gunn, who is a former prisoner and is now fighting for prisoners' rights, in an interview with *The Guardian*.

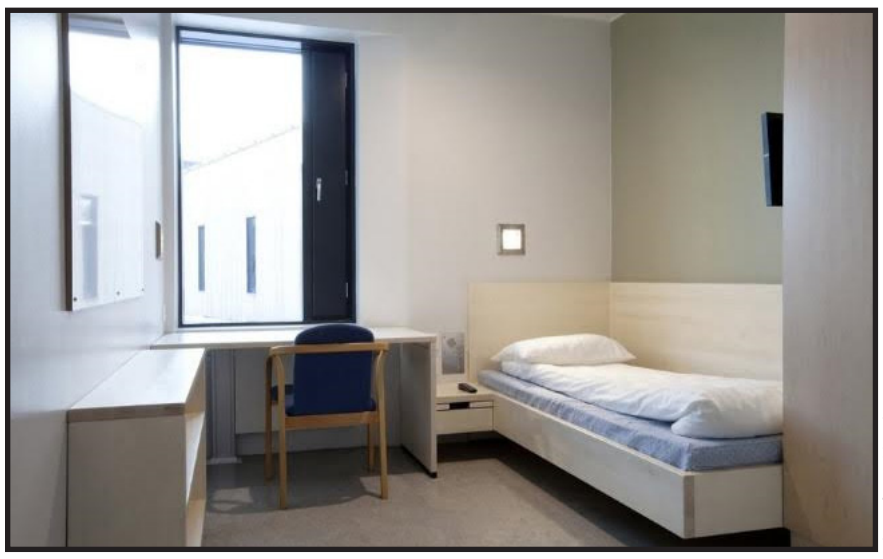

Photo from @iEagleInc

The interior of Norwegian high security prisons, which have friendly and bright rooms, seems vastly different from that of American prisions.

However, there are countries like Denmark and Norway that have the lowest reconviction rates with 29 and 20 percent respectively. A research team from *The Washington Post* spent six weeks in Denmark visiting different prisons and found out that most of them aren't traditional prisons. The prisoner's live relatively independent, while cooking their own meals and making their own clothes. The inmates can leave the prison during certain times and have the right to get family visitors weekly.

According to research from the *Business Insider* magazine, Norway has a similar approach by trying to make it seem as normal as possible with no bars in front of the windows, sharp tools in the kitchen, and friendships between inmates and guards. Also, the cell is filled with light and looks like a friendly, small hotel room. The prisoners also learn functional jobs like woodcarving, cooking, or assembly workshops that will prepare them for a life outside of prison. With these new learned jobs, it is easier to start a real life and get back into society after they have served their prison term, as *Business Insider* reports.

Unfortunately, not every country is treating the prisoners with respect and dignity and have the goal to integrate these people back into society after their sentence. There is many countries, in which the living conditions are way worse than in U.S. prisons.

"When comparing the U.S. system it varies depending upon the country in which you are comparing. As we know, some countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and China have very strict types of punishment (public beheadings, floggings and beatings) whereas more liberal countries such as Norway or Sweden have very low recidivism rates, relying more on restorative justice and vocational programs," said Dr. Mims.

In addition, each U.S. prison comes with a high cost. According to a research of CBS News, the cost for each prisoner per year ranges from $15,000 per year to almost $60,000 per year in states, like New York or New Jersey.

"Unfortunately, the U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world and many of our prisons are alarmingly overcrowded. In addition, many of the U.S. inmates that leave prison are deemed to return," stated Dr. Mims.

In a study of the Vera Institute of Justice, the 40 surveyed states stated that their cumulative spending on prisons is $39 billion per year. And with the rising amount of prisoners, it will also become more and more expensive for the taxpayer to carry the burden. Also, the rising number of prisoners require more prisons, since the current ones are already over capacity, as Dr. Mims mentioned.

It could be eye opening for the U.S. government that they need to change something in order to get the problem under control. Major researchers from newspapers, like *The Washington Post* and *Business Insider*, have travelled to more successful prison systems and found that their way of improving the system can also work in the United States. The drastic change to get to the standard, like Norway, might not even required, but programs need to be put in place that give a prisoner a future and help them rehabilitate and learn skills for life.

A change in the system can be beneficial situation for prisoners and the government; helping prisoners learn something valuable in prison that will train them for the job market will help them to start a new life and result in lower reconviction rates. In addition, it would lower the amount of prisoners and decrease the cost for the taxpayer extremely. The money could be well used to in the education or public safety sector to lower crime rates as well.

National

The Big Sugar Lie: Harvard Scientist Bribed

By Rafal Matuszczak
Staff Writer

In 1960's, the sugar industry paid scientists at Harvard University to publish articles downgrading the role of sugar in causing coronary heart disease, according to the JAMA Internal Medicine. The information is revealed in a study, published by JAMA Internal Medicine and written by dentist-turned-researcher from the University of California, San Francisco, Cristin Kearns.

The study, published in Nov. 2016, was based on 2,000 pages of Sugar Research Foundation reports documents and statements that Kearns discovered in the basement at Harvard University.

The documents present that a trade group called the Sugar Research Foundation, which is currently known as the Sugar Association, paid what would be $50,000 today to two researchers from Harvard University to publish a 1967 review of research on sugar, fat and heart disease, according to *The New York Times*.

The article from *The New York Times* indicates that the research was published in a prestigious New England Journal of Medicine, and it minimized the role of sugar in causing heart problems and put the blame on saturated fat.

Mark Hegsted was one of the scientists who participated in the manipulation, and later he became the head of nutrition at The United States Department of Agriculture. The other scientist was Frederick J. Stare, who was the chairman of Harvard's nutrition department at the time. *The New York Times* reports that neither of them is alive today.

During the time the manipulation occurred, researchers were not permitted to cite conflicts of interest or publicly acknowledge the payment. Hence, the two reviews that were published in the New England Journal of Medicine did not expose or uncover their relationship to the Sugar Research Foundation, according to statnews.com.

Due to the confidentiality advantage, the sugar industry was able to hide the proof that sugar had a link to heart disease. Instead, they shifted the blame on the intake of fat and cholesterol. They subsequently suggested that it is possible to reduce the risk of heart disease by cutting down the intake of fat alone, according to statnews.com.

The statnews.com article also indicates that the information presented in the journal led to the production of foods low in fat and high in sugar. Consequently, the sugar market share was boosted significantly.

"By doing that, it delayed the development of a scientific consensus on the sugar-heart disease for decades," said Stanton Glantz, Kearns's coauthor and an advisor at the University of California, San Francisco, according to statnews.com.

The newly discovered facts might be shocking for some people. Even though it is widely known that sugar is not healthy when overdosed, such manipulation might have had a significant impact on what American's diet looks like nowadays.

Photo from @HEALTHshareSA

50 years have passed since the scientists from Harvard falsified their reports, denouncing the harmful effects of sugar due to a payment from an organization in the food industry, Sugar Research Foundation.

"It is at once shocking that an industry would be so bold, but at the same time, given the money at stake, not surprising. I'm certain that the sugar industry has made quite an impact on peoples' health," said Christopher J. Miller, an associate professor of Biology and Ecology in the Math and Science Department at Saint Leo University.

Not only did the scientists lied, but the food industry also took advantage of the revelations as the companies could include more added sugars to the foods that they produced. The advantage that the fabricated research had given them was the fact that the consumers did not see a problem in such a procedure, for the sugar was not portrayed as very harmful.

"Over-consumption of simple carbohydrates has become commonplace. I believe many Americans were led to believe in the 1970's and 1980's fat was 'bad' and sugar, while not considered an ideal nutrient, was of little concern. The addition of 'hidden sugars' to many food items, consumption of large amounts of soft drinks (with the assumption we are hydrating), and the large proportions of foods, like desserts, is especially disconcerting," added Miller.

Downgrading the harmful effects of sugar is not the first time corporations have attempted to manipulate information to their benefit. Even the world's largest producer of sugary beverages, Coca-Cola, has spent millions of dollars on funding research that denies the relationship between sugary drinks and obesity, according to *The New York Times*.

The problem with information that tries portray fat as more harmful than sugar is that the truth is the complete opposite as not all fats are bad for the human body.

"With respect to the digestion and physiology of fat vs. sugar. Simply put, not all fats are bad, whereas refined sucrose, table sugar, has little redeeming value—it's simply calories," said Miller.

Despite the fact that sugar has no nutritional value for the human body, sugar industry companies were able to incorporate it in many foods that typically should not include the substance.

"With the rise of high fructose corn syrup, which is in most pre-sweetened foods and drinks, we have increased obesity rates, because it is metabolized so differently than other sugars," added Miller.

The negative effects of sugar are still debated by scientists. Even though many of them recommend to decrease the daily intake of sugar, it might be very difficult to force the food industry to adapt to those recommendations, and minimize the negative impact of the substance on the society.

Photo from @ReubenOrtega

This research by the Harvard scientists, which was funded by Sugar Research Foundation, made sugar seem less harmful, fooling the public to consume sugar, assuming that it is not a contributed to coronary heart disease.

Arts & Entertainment

Washington and Davis Amaze in "Fences"

By Joshua Arce
Contributing Writer

Viola Davis wins the Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actress in the new screenplay movie "Fences." She plays Rosa Maxson, a strong woman who loyally stands beside her husband, Troy Maxson (played by Denzel Washington) through sixteen years of marriage, two kids, and a tough, humble life. When a shocking truth shatters her world, audiences realize that strength and courage fill even the deepest cracks of Rosa Maxson's character.

Denzel is absolutely captivating in his role as the larger than life Troy Maxson. As Rosa puts it, her husband simply has a way of filling their family's whole house with his spirit, love, and energy. There is no doubt that Denzel is charismatic. His family and best friends relish his fast jokes, quick baseball analogies, and vivid stories of his glorious golden days as an all-star baseball player in the Negro Leagues. Troy is hardworking, a responsible father, tough but fair kind of guy; however, audiences will have a hard time completely agreeing with him. Troy is too hard on his sons Lyons and Cory, especially Cory, his youngest son who still lives at home with him. Watching Troy pound Cory down with old fashioned tough love and tough discipline will make today's audience question the methods of the older generation. For better or for worse, Troy Maxson's big personality has an incredible imprint on all the lives he touches, from his beloved wife and two kids to his best friend, Jim Bono (Stephen McKinley Henderson).

Make some time to go see "Fences" and be automatically sucked into 1950s America, a time and place sweltered by racism and prejudices, but also a pivotal time which saw a country steadily on its way toward equality. Witness the dichotomy between Troy and Cory's generation as they butt heads over the rapid changes of a world becoming equal. Cory, a big dreamer, is sure his father won't be able to stand in his way of his football career after receiving a college offer and possible scholarship to play ball for the school. But his dad Troy crushes his dreams by refusing to let him go because he won't understand that blacks were beginning to play football on white college teams. Strong headed Cory is older now and no longer blindly accepts his dad's stubborn judgements. Mustering more courage every time his father puts him down, Cory and Troy clash for several scenes before their feud finally apexes in a dramatic turn of events.

Rosa Maxson is virtually the perfect bride for Troy Maxson, and he undoubtedly loves and has loved her for as long as they both can remember. But even the most noblest of men have their secrets and Troy can no longer hold onto his. Viola and Denzel play a perfect duet as they capture the raw emotional strains of the terrible truth behind their relationship.

The beautifully portrayed screenplay in "Fences" will make viewers laugh, cry, and hold their breaths in suspense during this roller coaster experience of emotion. Experience the film both starring and directed by the famous Denzel Washington and see why Troy Maxson is the centerpiece of all relationships behind the fences in a little old house in Pittsburgh.

Upcoming Events

20th Annual Kumquat Festival
Date:
1/28 @ 9 AM - 5 PM
Location:
Downtown Dade City
Contact:
The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce 352-567-3769
Price:
Free
Description:
Visitors can enjoy kumquat treats ranging from pie, ice cream, cookies, smoothies, marmalade and salsa. There will be local entertainment, face painting, antique cars, and arts and crafts.

Farm Fest and Quilt Show
Date:
2/4 @ 9 AM - 4 PM
Location:
15602 Pioneer Museum Rd, Dade City
Contact:
Pioneer Florida Museum & Village 352-567-0262
Price:
Starting at $5
Description:
Quilt show, draft horse pull competition, venders, "The Way We Worked Smithsonian Exhibition," arts and crafts, petting zoo, syrup making, music, and more activities.

College Days
Created by Austin Chiavaroli
"The First Day"
Ok class. Guess what time it is? Time for a quiz!
This is the first day of class!!

Arts & Entertainment

The New Age of Final Fantasy

By Christian Martinez
Contributing Writer

Picture from @_Hikachi_

Prompto has the Photo skill, so the longer a player's party is awake and on adventures, the more photos Prompto can take, which can be saved at times of resting.

There are many RPG games out on the market, but unlike the rest, the Final Fantasy games do not have to be played in order so any one can join into the world at any game. This is stated at the beginning of each game with a simple message to the player, "A Final Fantasy for Fans and First-Timers." Throughout the creation of this game, the developers put into consideration every aspect they could in order to make this game the best of its kind; and they did not disappoint.

In "Final Fantasy XV" players control a character known as Prince Notcis, the next in line to rule over the nation of Insomnia. Along with the player are the player's close friends and faithful body guards: Gladiolus – The Prince's Shield, Ignis – The Prince's cook/personal driver, and Prompto – The Prince's Historian. In the beginning of the story the four friends leave the nation of Insomnia, and are headed to the city of Altissia, Capital of Niflheim, for Prince Noctis's wedding to Lady Lunafreya.

The wedding was meant to be used as a peace treaty between the two nations, but during the departure of Prince Noctis the military of Niflheim attacked the capital city of Insomnia, The Crown City. Prince Noctis and his fellow adventures receive news of the attack and are in utter shock of what has happened; Noctis is then informed that he, his friends, Lady Lunafreya, and his father, the king, are all claimed to be dead, and the city's royal gem stolen.

This game has 15 chapters throughout the story showing the adventures of Noctis, Gladio, Ignis, and Prompto as they reclaim the fallen Crown City and find out exactly what happened.

The details of the game are unbelievably realistic; for instance, when running through the open fields, the characters will complain about aching feet, being too hot, and being hungry. They may even ask whether the player wants to camp or go to the closest town and stay in a hotel. The rain beads off the car's paint, the breeze moves the characters' hair and clothes, the rain makes the characters' hair droop, and sunrises and sunsets look realistic. The animals will appear to have individual strands of fur.

Each character also has a specific skill that increases by during certain things; Noctis has fishing, so the more time the player spends fishing and the more fish the player catches the more his skill will increase. Gladiolus has a survival skill, so the longer the player travels on foot, gets into fights in the wild, and sleeps at outdoor campsites the more his will increase. Ignis has the skill of Cooking, so the more ingredients the player gathers from the wild and stores, the more recipes he creates, and the more the player allows him to cook when resting increases his skill.

The characters can also be injured by things in the surrounding areas; such as heat, poison, hypothermia, fall damage, magical damage. Sleep deprivation can also cause the characters to have a slower recovery speed on health and mana based.

Final Fantasy XV has been under development since 2006 and was supposed to introduce the characters in an earlier game that was sadly never released. The game was originally mentioned at the convention E3 back in 2013, and since than the fans have been waiting to see the story. On its release, nearly three years later, fans were not let down by Square Enix's, the developer of the Final Fantasy series, promise to make this game the best of its games to date.

The game has countless hours of gameplay, mainly through side quests, but it will certainly keep the player entertained for a long while. Also, unlike other games this game has put more scientific and strategic factors into it. Before, one could rush a level 20 monster while being level 18 and win. Not in this game; here one has to attack strategically, using specific weapons that would cause more damage to an enemy while also carrying plenty of potions. The enemies in the game range in levels of one to ninety-nine and the enemies that travel in larger numbers are more strategic and work together to try and take down the player and their team.

In past games, the player could use any weapon in their level range and magic at any time; Final Fantasy XV, however, introduces a recoil effect to magic, and some weapons may even deplete Noctis' health. The games ability to make players actually think about their next move in a situation is what makes Final Fantasy a real "jewel amongst rocks."

The story is extremely moving and hooks the players from beginning to end. With twists, sudden changes, being able to change some aspect with certain decisions, action, romance, tragedy, and even topics that many people nowadays can relate to. This is a game that is highly recommended for players that prefer an adventure game with an incredible story line to follow. The game is currently for sale, both digitally and in disk form, for $60 for the base game.

Final Fantasy XV is available for both Xbox One and PlayStation 4. The game brings the major part of RPGs to life for the players and for the people who may just be watching instead of playing.

Sports

How Sports Can be Unhealthy

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Multiple studies have shown that excessive endurance training can lead to health damage. Even though sports are usually associated with physical benefits as well as mental health, there might be a thin line between where the benefits end and the damage begins.

An analysis of existing studies presented by Mayo Clinic Proceedings found that people who involve in chronic extreme exercise, and who compete in endurance events have a higher chance to develop heart damages and heart disorders than people who exercise moderately, according to health.clevelandclinic.org.

The article also explains that extreme exercise is very demanding for human's body, especially, the cardiovascular system. It has been found that after finishing endurance involving events, such as fast running, biomarkers that are associated with heart damage are present in athletes' blood samples. The biomarkers disappear by themselves within few hours. However, in case of prolonged stress put on the heart due to excessive endurance exercise, the process might take weeks, if not months, or even lead to heart remodeling, according to the health.clevelandclinic.org.

Such abnormalities have led some endurance athletes to death. Micah True, an American ultra-marathon runner who is a main character for one of the best-selling books about running, titled Born to Run, died at the age of 58 during his 12-mile training run on Mar. 27, 2012, according to the sciencedaily.com.

As an ultra-marathon runner, True took part in races which many times were as long as 100 miles. The prolonged excessive exercise during training, as well as while competing might have led the runner to develop heart disorders which, consequently resulted in his death.

The Mayo Clinic Proceedings study has also revealed that 12 percent of marathon runners who apparently had been entirely healthy, during a two-year follow-up, had higher coronary heart disease even rate than the control group, according to sciencedaily.com.

Even though it might seem like endurance training is unhealthy for a human's body, in fact, like any other exercise it also brings many benefits.

"Physical exercise, though not a drug, possesses many traits of a powerful pharmacologic agent. A routine of daily physical activity can be highly effective for prevention and treatment of many diseases, including coronary heart disease, hypertension, heart failure, and obesity," said James H. O'Keefe, MD, of Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, MO in the interview for sciencedaily.com.

The difference that distinguishes a healthy athlete and an athlete that might develop heart problems is how intense the training is, and how long it lasts.

"As with any pharmacologic agent, a safe upper dose limit potentially exists, beyond which the adverse effects of physical exercises, such as musculoskeletal trauma and cardiovascular stress, may outweigh its benefits," added O'Keefe.

Professional athletes might have a higher chance to develop such problems as their main goal is to adapt their bodies to high-intensity exercise which, eventually, leads to better performance during competition. Not only do the athletes exhaust their bodies to the limits during a competition, but also during practice. Consequently, they might experience changes in their cardiovascular system, such as rhythm abnormalities, due to the amount of time spent while training and competing, according to sciencedaily.com.

Nevertheless, amateur athletes are also at the risk of experiencing health problems, as the quality of performance does not play a role in the process of developing heart issues. It is possible that they spend the same amount of time training, and they exhaust their bodies as much as professional athletes do.

However, endurance training is also beneficial for human's body. The benefits include lower blood pressure, increased strength, lower risk of developing diabetes, and even better metal health according to health.clevelandclinic.com. Therefore, some people might wonder when the sport becomes unhealthy.

The minimum amount of time spent on doing moderate physical activity is equal to 150 minutes per week, according to The American Heart Association. Cleveland Clinic indicates that people who plan on taking part in competition and endurance sports should be examined by doctors before involving in the exercise regimen or applying any significant changes to it.

"Exercise and even strenuous exercise is clearly associated with enormous heart health benefits in the vast majority of people when compared to people who do not exercise but, in a very small minority who have underlying problems, exercise can trigger arrhythmia," said MD,PhD, Director, Sports Cardiology Center at Cleveland Clinic, Dermot Phelan for health.clevelandclinic.org.

Even though there are risks associated with participating in endurance sports, the benefits are more significant.

"While there is emerging evidence that prolonged strenuous exercise can increase risk of atrial fibrillation, the long-term risk of this is small compared to inactivity," added Phelan.

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